OF MICHIGAN

JUN 19 1958

LIBRARY SCIENCE

ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

THE

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE A.A.L.

A State of Flux

Further Impacts

116

115

LIBRARY EDUCATION TO-DAY

119

Your Letters

122

A new Language for Documentation 125

CEDRIC CHIVERS LTD.

PORTWAY, BATH

BOOKBINDERS

AND
BOOKSELLERS

TELEGRAMS
"DUROFLEX," BATH

TELEPHONE 7355. BATH

BENLOCK LTD

We now offer a new range of patterned bindings for FICTION

crown 8vo - 3/5d.

Library Bookbinders and Booksellers



Also available:

New cover designs
with pleasing
motifs for
JUVENILE
"FLATS"

Please note new address

BENLOCK LTD'. MIDDLESBROUGH ROAD SOUTH BANK MIDDLESBROUGH

Telephone: South Bank 58529





LIBRACO

are the makers of LIBRARY FURNITURE and EQUIPMENT

> It is the best in DESIGN QUALITY WORKMANSHIP and FINISH

It is used all over the world and gives a lifetime of service

Illustrated lists, designs, and estimates free from

Lombard Wall, Woolwich Road CHARLTON. S.E.7

Telephone: GREENWICH 3308/9

THE LIBRARY BOOKSELLERS

SPECIAL REINFORCING AVAILABLE
ON ALL BOOKS SUPPLIED BY US.
PLEASE WRITE FOR PARTICULARS
AND SAMPLE.

SOLE AGENTS FOR

THE AMERICAN LIBRARY
ASSOCIATION

DEWEY DECIMAL CLASSIFICATION

15th Revised Edition - £7 15 0 net

THE WOOLSTON BOOK CO., LTD.

THE ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

Official Journal of the Association of Assistant Librarians

(Section of the Library Association)

EDITOR: D. HARRISON

Highfield Branch Library, London Road, Sheffield 2.

VOL. 51. NO. 6

JUNE, 1958

A State of Flux

To comment in a professional periodical on current controversies is a hazardous undertaking to-day. The inevitable time-lag between composition and publication is likely to leave us commenting on a state of affairs no longer in existence. If we were to discuss the appropriate size of the library authority, the Roberts Committee would doubtless have the lot nationalised before anyone got round to reading it. If we were to speak of salaries, the N.J.C. would have awarded A.P.T. V to all Branch Librarians before we went to press. The reorganisation of the L.A. is taboo; any day we may wake to find the A.A.L. abolished, or become a Trade Union, or Chamber of Commerce, or something

And somewhere in this Limbo is a consideration by the L.A. Council of a further reorganisation of the examination syllabus, including, we were led to believe (*Liaison*, July 1957), the abolition of the F.P.E. and substitution of a two-tiered system of examinations. Well, of course, you know, it's easy to scrap an exam; but to get a committee to agree to scrap an exam. . . In fact, seeping out of Limbo, comes the rumour that we may not after all scrap anything, and future generations may be compelled to gnaw their way through the old unappetising three-tiered cake. Sad-eyed "students" may still hear the uninspired drone of the part-time tutor, doing his best with co-option and delegation of powers—never mind, they'll get it again in Registration or at Final stage if they don't remember it now—with a different emphasis, of course. Bleary-eyed tutors may still burn the early-morning oil over homework whose authors will never qualify as librarians, but have been encouraged to take professional examinations by the apparent simplicity of the First Professional.

Surely one general examination, preferably commenced after at least two years' experience—except possibly in the case of graduates and other late-starters—is qualification enough for the Chartered Librarian. A second examination requiring a more mature approach and offering a chance to specialise could well complete the normal theoretical training of the Compleat Librarian. The role of Registration and Finals in such a scheme is obvious, but where does the F.P.E. fit, in? Exams which keep bright young things from the normal outlets for their surplus energy, and tutors from spending adequate time on more serious students, have nothing to recommend them. We should be reassured before too long that the hopes engendered by last July's Liaison were not premature, and that the more cautious note in November was merely a reminder that these things take time—even the A.A.L. appreciates that—and not the first halting step away from previously declared intentions.

Impact On An Erk!

by T. F. Houghton Manchester School of Librarianship

I arrived at University Hall, Liverpool, rather too late for tea and an hour too early for dinner. A rather unpromising start. A large notice, beautifully stencilled in red, informed me that the Grand National was off. I was just about to make a note to report this inaccuracy to the Press Council, or to write a letter to The Times, when I realised that the visit to the Grand National had been a star attraction for the con-Mr. Davinson said that the trip was off due to lack of co-operation on the part of the Chief Constable of Liverpool. This is a working conference, I was informed by one of the committee; we have no time for such frivolities as steeplechasing.

Later in the evening I noticed that the area around the notice board was well frequented. I put this down as a further example of the conference secretary's flair for advertisement. A little later I saw that the bar was set up in close proximity to the notice board-I put this down to several reasons.

I had wondered what the special attractions of an A.A.L. conference were; I found one of them at dinner on Saturday night. The conversation goes something like this:-

"Did you know that is in for . . . ?"
"Really! I don't think he'll get it ."

"No not with on the committee."

Certainly helpful conversation for a budding librarian, but not very much related to L.A. exams, or the acquisition of professional experience.

The social evening on Friday found a number of people in a convivial mood, some others light-heartedly listening to jazz music, and somewhere a small group were listening to classical music. I'm all for culture and social contact; I was convivial at the jazz session.

Later I found a further attraction of A.A.L. conferences. A number of people gathered together for a serious late evening discussion in one of the rooms in the Hall. Mr. Moon and other provided us from time to time with some light entertainment, and we had frequently to restrain a gentleman from telling a story he knew about rabbits.

Saturday dawned wet and cold. In the afternoon three visits were arranged; we got back well in time for dinner. (The tea our party had

at the Picton Library was very nice).

The professional chit-chat which goes on between syndicates at these conferences revealed another tit-bit. For those of you who have been gloomily pondering the reasons for the disappearance of prominent members of the A.A.L. into other fields, the reason given by one of them is that there is nothing in this country for librarians of his generation, and that most of the present chiefs' jobs are filled for the next 10 to 15 years.

The social evening on Saturday was again followed by a discussion group, this time in Mr. Moon's room. With Mr. Moon's entertainment, some light refreshment, and the arrival of Mr. Griffith, plus stories, we did very nicely, thank you! Somewhere in the building the Leeds Library School had a somewhat similar session. Meantime, Mr. Lovell and Mr. Foskett were in the library, discussing, of all things-Librarianship. I'm led to believe that this went on into the early hours of the morning.

On Sunday I got up late and just scraped into breakfast. On Sunday afternoon the conference wound up with its final session, synthesising the syndicates. That reminds me I've not mentioned the syndicates, but Mr. Jones has already dissected these with admirable thoroughness!

A Junior at the Conference

by Janice Brown, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine

As a whole, the Liverpool conference was interesting and rewarding—both entertaining and educational. One feels that much can be gained through these conferences, where some problems can, perhaps, be discussed more fully in a more informal atmosphere than that of the committee room; and a wider outlook can be gained by meeting delegates from various parts of the country, giving an opportunity for discussion with assistants from library systems about which one's day-to-day knowledge is necessarily limited. There seemed, however, an inclination to remain in small groups and, although this is to a certain extent unavoidable, more might perhaps have been gained by a freer interchange. Some very pleasant mealtimes, however, assisted the flow of conversation.

The emphasis of the Conference seemed to be on Public Libraries. This is only natural, as they form the greater part of the membership, but perhaps if more junior assistants from University and Special libraries had attended, further aspects of the subjects discussed, might have been revealed.

I was encouraged to attend by the library where I am employed, but there did not seem to be many other junior assistants at the Liverpool Conference, although there were several branch librarians, senior assistants, and quite a number of Library School students.

It is, of course, essential that there should be experienced assistants at these conferences to lead discussion and give advice. It is also interesting and profitable to hear an exchange of views between those who have had personal experience of essential problems, but the conference would be strengthened by a greater number of junior assistants, expressing comments and views on their libraries, seen from the other end of the scale. Encouragement to attend conferences, financially and otherwise, from libraries would perhaps assist this problem.

Foreign Book Supply

The Bookseller for April 5th has reported the conference proceedings where they touched upon the book trade. In consequence, we have received letters of protest from booksellers denying the allegation that arrangements for supplying foreign books (apart from French and German) are inadequate. "There are," says one such letter, "a number of booksellers in this country who maintain an efficiently organised Foreign Department, who import and stock not only French and German books, but also books from Italy, Spain, Russia and the Scandinavian countries, and who are in a position to obtain any book in print from any part of the world. Most of these booksellers regularly distribute catalogues of Continental books and I have no doubt the Secretary of the Booksellers' Association would gladly supply a list of the names and addresses of members of the Foreign Book Group to any interested librarian."

Another Conference

by F. J. Message, Erith Public Libraries

It is always interesting to hear what our friends say about us when they are at Harrogate and we are at Liverpool, so I played truant from the A.A.L. Conference and went instead to the W.E.A. Conference on 29th—30th March, 1958.

At the Harrogate Conference of the W.E.A., a plea was made for members to take a look at their local public library buildings to see if they are adequate for their function as local centres of culture and to press for rebuilding where necessary. We were asked to provide free accommodation for W.E.A. classes in libraries where that was not already being done, and the activities of the N.C.L. in providing books for adult classes was commended.

The Association's Annual Report includes an appendix of evidence prepared for submission to the Roberts Committe and it shows a definite preference for county and county borough library authorities "providing county services are generally brought to a higher standard." I had wondered if the W.E.A. members on the Councils of small towns might have spoken against this, but no word of criticism was raised when the Conference accepted this Report.

Perhaps space may be found for a few direct quotations from the W.E.A's. evidence to the Roberts Committee:—"As it is, local authorities are being faced with government appeals to economise in all their services; with the introduction of block grants at a time of rising prices of books and necessary salary increases, expenditure on libraries is likely to be limited or cut down, especially in areas where the service is already poorest because of the failure or inability of the local authority to spend enough in the past. In this situation a national policy on libraries becomes even more essential, to be implemented by strong directives to local authorities"

"Regional library bureaux should have 50 per cent of their expenditure as 'a direct grant in aid of central funds'"

"... local authorities should be encouraged to build new libraries with room for general cultural and educational activities which can be used even during library opening hours. Many libraries need rehousing; plans which have been discussed for many years for doing this should be carried out in the next few years."

An interesting suggestion is also made for collecting together, especially in the larger town halls, those "books, reports, white papers, etc., mostly diffused in chief officers' rooms not available even to the local authority staff" and turn them into "a usable private library."

The W.E.A's, summary of this evidence is:-

"The standard of the library service should be raised and financial resources made available to carry out a national policy for the development of libraries as centres for the stimulation and satisfaction of the widest educational interests."

The new edition of the printed catalogue of the L.A. Library has recently been published. A correspondent informs us that it includes "something called an Author and Subject Index." He also remarks—and we must agree with him— that it appears to include no subject entries at all!

Library Education Today

Philip M. Whiteman

Lecturer, Leeds School of Librarianship

What is the nature of professional education for librarianship? This is the important question which comes to mind after reading the report of a recent conference.

The conference itself was a week-end event, which included papers on part-time tuition, correspondence courses, and library schools. The conference also split into groups to discuss teaching problems peculiar to particular sections of the examinations. The report includes summaries of the discussions, with the exception of those on Registration Group A. Of the three papers, that of Mr. Benge is a thoughtful discussion of problems facing the part-time tutor, while Mr. Davey's is a clear explanation and defence of the correspondence course. Mr. Caldwell's contribution is outstanding for its completely new statistical information on the contribution of the library schools. As one who attended this conference wondering what it would all achieve, the present writer came away with a very real appreciation of problems facing part-time and correspondence tutors and of the impressive way in which they are being tackled.

To return to the question. What is the nature of professional education?

May I make two assumptions on points which I assume to be generally accepted? Firstly, that professional education is not synonymous with preparation for examinations or with examinations themselves. The examinations are the means, always an imperfect one, of testing competence to practise. In themselves they have nothing to do with education, although they are required in some form to test knowledge and judgment developed in the educational process. Secondly, that in education at the higher level, full-time rather than part-time study is desirable. This assumption is inherent in university courses, and in the professional education of, for example, teachers and architects. It is true that for many professions part-time facilities do exist, but the trend in recent years has been steadily towards full-time education. Presumably there is nothing peculiar about librarianship which makes its educational requirements exceptional.

Full-time education for librarianship in Britain is essentially a postwar development, the one exception being the London School, founded in 1919. Starting on an emergency basis to meet an emergency situation, the schools have for some years now been firmly on their feet, providing one of the normal methods of preparation for L.A. examinations. As Mr. Caldwell demonstrated in his paper, although only about 15 per cent of those entering for the Registration examination are direct from the schools, 66 per cent of those registered as new Chartered Librarians in the period 1947-1956 had attended a full-time school.

So the schools have made a not inconsiderable mark. It would be going beyond the truth however, to say that they are now accepted and supported with enthusiasm by the majority of librarians. It is still contended in some quarters that library school lecturers are people who, for lack of "practical experience," are limited to filling the minds of the young and green with vast quantities of theoretical nonsense which give

them ideas above their station, i.e., that of efficient chargers, dischargers, and shelvers of books! The situation visualised by Mr. Hutchings in 1947 when he wrote of the heads of the schools "... These men will become expert. They will be the people to consult if the syllabus has to be modified; they will be able to advise as to examination standards ..." is still far from being accepted by the profession. The criticism that the lecturers have not returned to the field is still heard, and the appeal of Mr. Sewell that "the British library profession should accept the fact that there is in it a place for the librarian educator" is received without enthusiasm.

Ho

vitio

Am

cou

on

exis

of

ma

suc

vid

adv

No

the

pri

its

Co

me

im

sit

pe

re

se

co

R

Full-time lecturers are criticised for their lack of training as teachers. Here such critics as the former editor of the Assistant Librarian⁴ seem to be out of touch with the organization of further education. The vast majority of barristers, architects, engineers, management experts, accountants, bankers, etc., who teach full-time, lack such training. No doubt it would be advantageous if all such lecturers received some training in teaching method, but the fact remains that an impressive body of teaching experience has been built up in these fields and in librarianship.

The schools are criticised for doing little more than preparing students for L.A. examinations, for failing to provide facilities for specialised study and research, for failing to publish. There is some truth in all this, but it must be considered in relation to the small staffs, long teaching hours, the number of schools, the requirements of the L.A. examination machine, and the organization of L.E.A. colleges. It is very true that publishing by the schools has been negligible, but the contribution of lecturers to the professional literature form a not unimpressive list.

All this by way of comment on common criticisms of the schools. Much remains to be done before the schools are making their maximum contribution to professional development, but the schools are functioning and their courses are educational—as all but a small minority of past students (usually the failures by any standard) will testify.

From time to time, the idea that professional education at its best is a full-time undertaking has received some recognition in the profession. The L.A. Council once solemnly decided that as from 1951 the Registration examination must be passed at one sitting—a move obviously geared to full-time courses. The decision was not confirmed—it was quietly dropped as a result of sentimental appeals based on the alleged plight of the student who could not attend library school. This argument—that there are some who cannot undertake a full-time course—has been used for years, is used now, and could always be used to delay the development of full-time education as the sole method. Significantly, there is now an impressive file of applicants for library school places who have been refused L.E.A. grants for full-time education specifically on the grounds that adequate part-time facilities exist in their own area!

Where does the A.A.L. stand in these matters? The question is not unimportant because the A.A.L. represents a very high proportion of the L.A. membership and is deeply involved in the correspondence course system. The A.A.L. has always supported the idea of full-time education—at least on paper, but it would hardly be an exaggeration to suggest that its support for the schools has been lukewarm and the measures it has taken to promote full-time education, negligible.

The A.A.L. these days is on the defensive and has been since the Honorary Treasurer of the L.A. suggested that most of its present activities could be run as satisfactorily and more economically by the L.A. Among the more significant of these activities are the correspondence courses. In defending itself the A.A.L. naturally relies to a great extent on its position as a correspondence college to justify its continued existence. It does so to the point of failing to promote the best methods of professional education. However efficient a correspondence course may be in terms of examination results (and the A.A.L. record is good), such a course has nothing to do with education—a process which demands personal contact between tutor and student, not the tenuous link provided by the Postmaster-General. Yet it is a duty of the A.A.L. to advance professional education.

In the United States, Canada, New Zealand, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and many other countries full-time education is accepted by the profession as the only appropriate method. In not recognizing this principle, the British profession is badly out of step and is holding back its own development. The A.A.L. bears a heavy responsibility, for its Council has evaded this crucial issue for years.

The Council could do no greater service to our professional development than this: (a) Declare itself firmly in favour of full-time education as the only appropriate method, (b) Urge upon the L.A. the need to implement its earlier decision that Registration must be passed at one sitting, and to alter its examination regulations so that after a transitional period of say three years, a period of full-time education would be required as a condition of entry for the Registration examination, (c) Modify its own support for correspondence courses by limiting them severely to specialised alternatives at Final level, for which full-time facilities are unlikely to be available in most schools for some years to come.

References:

- Association of Assistant Librarians and Standing Committee on Education for Librarianship (London Region), Library Education To-day: report of the National Conference, May 1957. L.A. (London and Home Counties Branch), 1957. 5s.
- ² Library Review, Spring 1947, p. 220.
- Assistant Librarian, June 1956, p. 98.
- ⁴ Assistant Librarian, November 1957, p. 187.

OSTRICH FEATHERS IN KEESING'S CAP

For many years KEESING'S has been held in high regard by English- and Afrikaansspeaking people alike throughout the Union of South Africa, where at present 18 Public Libraries subscribe to its documentary Service for instant reference to reliable data on Current Affairs the world over.

CRAMER'S

for MUSIC

MUSICAL LITERATURE AND MUSIC BINDING

139, New Bond Street London, W.1

* Complete Music Service Provided

Your Letters

Fiction Provision

The correspondence aroused by the "Rotten Bookstock" gambit seems to have almost spent its force. Two recent correspondents have, however, simultaneously questioned the line of approach adopted by many of our contributors.

From Brian Selby, National Film Archive:-

The most important point which Mr. Shearman (Assistant Librarian, April) should have raised is: What are the needs of "the light literature reader" who is "one of the largest definable groups of readers belonging to our libraries"? I suggest that the most serious hindrance to constructive thought and effort on this question of the reading habits and needs of those whom Dr. Ranganathan calls "the lower I.Q's." is the lack of facts on which to base a policy, which is caused by the absence of research into contemporary reading. It seems to me that until the profession has investigated intensively and on a large scale what is read by whom and for what reasons, and what is the desirable function of the library in a democratic society which depends upon an intelligent and informed community, it is not possible to regard any writing on this subject being anything more than speculation inadequately based on isolated personal experiences of what people read and why they read it.

From J. E. Hill, Stalybridge Public Library:

I have read with some interest the correspondence on the topic of fiction provision in public libraries. The subject has been well ventilated as far as the books themselves are concerned, but I feel slightly surprised that no one has touched, except indirectly, on the most obvious factor in the discussion. I have worked for periods varying from three months to three years in some half-dozen different types of library, and one fact that has struck me forcibly is that reading habits vary enormously according to the social background of the reader. Whether we like it or not, the readers ultimately have a large say in determining the character of bookstock, if only by the negative means of leaving alone literature they don't like, and causing more to be spent on replacing books they do like, by sheer use. Richard Hoggart's *Uses of Literacy* is the sort of study we ought to use to enlighten ourselves about this. It is, incidentally, rather a comment on our profession that this had to be produced by an "outsider."

05

th

F

0

to

The bookstock is there to serve the community, and unless we study the community as well as the bookstock we are being rather unrealistic. Large firms have a department for "Market research," because their success or failure depends on their gauging public taste and meeting it. We as librarians have no systematic interest in our public—is it because our income is not directly dependent on returns? Possibly the introduction of a study of this kind might do harm; if its results were adopted as a guide it would lead to a "bread and circuses" attitude (which is unfortunately assumed unconsciously by not a few librarians already), and discourage healthy idealism and the provision of services which do not show a tangible return. However, I do suggest that from a sense of

Announcing the latest in the Primer series

A Primer of

nbit ave.

ure

ging

uceds

of

rch

has

and

n a

as

ted

of ted

sed

in

to

act

sly it ter

ire

lev

of ly,

an

dy

ic.

eir

it.

ise

oed

18

nd

ot

of

JUST PUBLISHED!

NON-BOOK MATERIALS

by

in Libraries

DONALD MASON, F.L.A.

Librarian, I.C.I., Dyestuffs Division.

With a long appendix on gramophone records by Jean C. Cowan, F.L.A., Hendon Public Libraries.

NTENDED for use in all types of library, this primer gives up-to-date guidance on the selecting, recording, cataloguing, storing and handling of the following materials:—

- ★ Maps★ Illustrations
- ★ Press Cuttings★ Films
- Photocopies Microcopies

A chapter is also included on information storage and retrieval.

Order from :-

The Hon. Education and Sales Officer, 49, Halstead Gardens, London, N.21. PRICE - 20/-(15/- to members of the L.A.).

responsibility more awareness of the nature and needs of differing types of community ought to be shown. Who is going to write Middle classes—are they middlebrows? or Recommended reading-notes on Foreign Office cultural life? Someone, I hope, in the profession. The least the piper can do is to show an interest in the payer.

Aldous for Adolescents

Mrs. Joan Firth asked in April whether "lust and violence were a suitable diet for a boy," and suggested that "replies may show an interesting division of opinion between the under- and over-30s." We publish therefore one from each of these categories.

From John Gillard Watson, Barnett Library, Oxford University:-

Mrs. Firth has raised an interesting and important point; but it cannot be answered in a letter—the list of books from modern authors suitable for teenagers would be rather too long. However, the issue is whether books which include sex and violence are "unsuitable" because of the sex and violence. Put this way, the case has been handed over to the Podsnaps*. It is what the sex and violence are used for that makes all the difference. As used by Mickey Spillane, they are unsuitable for anyone; and to cite the momentary whipping-boy, as used by Ian Fleming.

Teenage boys (and maybe girls, for all I know) are already keenly interested in sex and violence. That does not mean that they are eager to commit rape at the first opportunity, or that they are incapable of being influenced for good. It is the first mistake of the Podsnaps to assume that any reading which deals in any way with sex and violence necessarily influences its readers to express their proclivities for sex and violence. It is the parallel mistake of the garbage merchants (exemplified in the Horror Comic merchants) to assume that to read about sex and violence "sublimates" these proclivities in a harmless way. Both are hypocrites.

If you try to keep the school or college library free of all novels with a trace of sex or violence, the teenagers will merely read outside; and they are then much more likely to get hold of the really vicious. This is why Hemingway should be in the school library; and Lawrence and Amis; and Golding; but not Spillane or Fleming or Cheyney. The Podsnaps will be horrified if Women in Love, Nineteen Eighty-four, The Weather in the Streets and The Heart of the Matter are brought home by their teenage sons and daughters; in case of complaint it is up to the teacher or librarian to point out that these books are highly moral.

mean a sta

logis

New

that

for i

of the

with

can

Port

brie

· wl

patr

tutio

Nat Am

in a

the

As to the list, the most up-to-date I know is Modern Adult Fiction for School and College Libraries, by Norman Culpan, published by the School Library Association in 1955 at 4s. As to my qualifications for laying the law down in this matter, I have taught a large number of youths from 15 to 20-odd years old, in a technical college, fairly recently And I am 39 years old, so my choice of authors and titles is probably old-fashioned, as no doubt Mr. Culpan's already is.

*See Our Mutual Friend.

From R. Ingham, Liverpool Public Libraries:-

With reference to Mrs. Firth's letter (Assistant, April, 1958), I am surprised to find the question of "suitability" being raised by a librarian in a professional journal when the works involved are of a recognised literary standard. It is rather reminiscent of a certain outraged parent lonce tried to reason with whose sixteen-year-old son had taken home an Aldous Huxley from the "Adolescents" Section of the library.

In my teens I read and enjoyed Huxley, Greene, Lawrence and Maugham, and so far I have escaped an appearance in court on the charge of rape. Moreover I read them openly at home and without comment from my parents, who, being working-class Northerners, were no doubt too engrossed with the grim struggle for survival to worry about my moral welfare.

I fail to see where the problem arises in the instance given. The boy has solved it himself, he does not like Hemingway therefore he will not read any more, but I certainly agree with the schoolmaster as to Mrs Firth being behind the times. Any novel by a modern author is suitable for a teenager as long as it is written from a literary and not a pornographic point of view. An interest in sex is natural and inevitable during these years and it is far "healthier" to read Lady Chatterley's Lover than Spicy Stories. We are frequently informed that a teacher's lot is not a happy one; they deserve every assistance in their attempts to awaken minds to the appreciation of good literature. It seems to me that there is something wrong when a librarian deliberately does her best to undermine such an influence.

Of course, as Mrs. Firth will have realised, I am under thirty.

A NEW LANGUAGE FOR DOCUMENTATION

is to

nce:

The

tion

the

for

of

ably

nt l me

and the

Out

ere TTY

YOU

not

rs. ble 10-

ing

an

t a en

ere erBy B. C. Sexton, Liverpool Public Libraries

ence Ever since the collapse of Latin as the common language of Western and culture, men have dreamed and schemed of replacing it by a new and ified artificial auxiliary. Since the later years of the nineteenth century, these and efforts have increasingly begun to bridge the gap between Utopia and are reality, as the projects became more and more capable of use as genuine means of intercommunication. The latest achievement is "Interlingua," a standardized West-European, scientifically codified by expert philo-logists working for the International Auxiliary Language Association of New York. What is of emphatic interest in this to librarians is the fact that the new auxiliary has already, after only five years of existence, won The for itself an intensely practical utilisation in the world of documentation.

This achievement has been made possible by the skilful exploitation of the common Greco-Latin element in the Western linguistic heritage, the with the result that texts in Interlingua, and technical texts in particular, can be understood at first sight, without preliminary study, by any educated person who knows either French, Latin, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese or English. The only possible exceptions to this would be a brief list of particles (such as words for "the," "of," "always," "that," "wherever," "like," etc.), short enough to appear on a single postcard.

Immediately from its inception Interlingua was taken under the patronage of Science Service, director Watson Davis, an American instilution for the popularisation of science, with trustees nominated by the National Academy of Sciences, the National Research Council, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and other influential bodies. From 1952, this institution's Science News Letter appeared in an Interlingua edition as Scientia International, now incorporated with amr the parent periodical and issued in an edition of 45,000 copies. The

G. BLUNT & SONS LTD.

Established 1879

LIBRARY BOOKBINDERS AND BOOKSELLERS

EUROPEAN AGENTS FOR RANGANATHAN AND VISWANATHAN LIBRARY TEXTBOOKS

Showroom:

100 GREAT RUSSELL STREET LONDON, W.C.1

Telephone MUSEUM' 5650 & G335

Head Office and Works:

NORTH ACTON ROAD, HARLESDEN, LONDON, N.W.10

Telephone: ELGAR 7411-2-3

Interlingua articles in Science News Letter are also syndicated to the Brazilian periodical Jornal de Ciencias and the daily newspaper O Globo both of Rio de Janeiro.

These articles are popular in form, intended for the informed intelligent layman rather than the specialist. Of greater interest to librariant is the rapidly increasing number of scientific, chiefly medical, periodicals that publish in Interlingua abstracts of all their original articles. These include: American Heart Journal, American Journal of Clinical Patho. logy, American Journal of the Medical Sciences, Archives Peruanos to Patologia y Clinica, Blood: the Journal of Hematology, Journal of Dental Medicine, Quarterly Bulletin of Sea View Hospital (New York). Revision Cubana de Cardiologia.

As yet, the use of Interlingua in the academic field is limited largely to the United States. In view, however, of its naturalness, simplicity, internationality and scholarly character, it seems destined for a great future in documentation. What does it look like? Well, have a go with this: -

"Le unitate del civilisation occidental corresponde in grande mesura a un unitate linguistic. Le linguas que nos distingue como francese, anglese, espaniol, germano, italiono, etc. ha in commun un fundo si extensive de ideas e principios, de formas e constructiones, que on se senti fortiate reguardar los como variantes del mesme standard. Iste standard es interlingua, le "lingua general" que differe del linguas coordinate in illo solo como untypo differe del individuos que illo representa."

Comprehende vos interlingua?

Bibliography.

- Gode, A. Interlingua a prime vista. New York, Storm Publishers. 1954.
- Gode, A. Interlingua-English: a dictionary of the international language. New York, Storm Publishers, 1951.
- and Blair, H.E. Interlingua: a grammar of the interna-3. Gode, A. tional language. New York, Storm Publishers, 1951 (second edition, 1956).

 4. Bibliographia de Interlingua. New York, Novas de Interlingua, 1955.
- 5. Scientia International. (passim).
- Novas de Interlingua. Vol. II. Nos. 3-5. Oct. 1955-Mar. 1956.
- Littera circula . . . No. 11. Sept. 1956.

Tutors' Comments, March, 1958.

We apologise for an unfortunate error in the setting of the Tutors' Comments in the March Assistant, which must have caused some bewilderment to readers of the section on Registration Group C and considerable annoyance to the tutors whose answers were affected. Question No. 10 is broken in the middle by Question No. 7 of Final Part 2b (University and College Libraries) and should continue with the penultimate paragraph on page IX.

H. KARNAC (BOOKS)

LTD.

58, GLOUCESTER RD., LONDON, S.W.7.

WESTERN 7908.

New and Secondhand Books on all subjects.

WASTELL'S

EDUCATIONAL SUPPLY SERVICE

THE PUBLIC AND COUNTY
LIBRARY BOOKSELLERS

806 HIGH ROAD, LONDON, N.17

TOT. 3354/5

ESTABLISHED 1868

J. STARR & SONS, LTD.

Specialist Library Bookbinders

Dawber Street Works Wigan, Lancs.

'Phone: 2 Lines 3484-5

llj.

ans als ese

de tal sta

ely ty,

eat ith

se,

nti ird in

TS,

51

55.

mto

he es)

'Grams: Starrs 3484

Wigan

One Quality only-The Best

WOODFIELD & STANLEY

LIMITED

SPECIALISTS IN CHILDREN'S BOOKS

BROOKFIELD MILLS, KIRKBURTON, HUDDERSFIELD

AND

THE CHILDREN'S BOOKSHOP

64, GREAT RUSSELL STREET, LONDON, W.C.1

ASKEWS OF PRESTON

KNOWN THROUGHOUT THE BRITISH ISLES FOR EFFICIENCY, SERVICE AND COURTESY

> ESTABLISHED OVER 75 YEARS

JAMES ASKEW AND SON, LTD.

CORPORATION STREET

PRESTON





A. M. HALDANE

*

WE SPECIALISE IN CHILDREN'S BOOKS

*

B.N.B. ORDERS

*

SPECIAL REQUESTS

*

PROMPT SERVICE

especially in the London Area

*

5, DENMARK STREET, CHARING CROSS ROAD, W.C.2

COVent Garden 0488

THE
HOLT-JACKSON
BOOK COMPANY
LIMITED

Public and County Library Booksellers

00

00

MONTAUBAN CHAMBERS, ST. ANNES-ON-SEA, LANCS.

Telephone: St. Annes 575

00

London Showrooms:

CLERKENWELL ROAD, E.C.1 59, BRITTON STREET.

Telephone: Clerkenwell 3250

& R. HOLMES

(BOOKS) LTD.

W. & R. HOLMES are in a position to offer the highest qualified service n all matters connected with library supply: their library department is organized to that end.

> AGENTS FOR THE H. W. WILSON CO.'S LIBRARY AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL PUBLICATIONS

W. & R. HOLMES

(BOOKS) LTD. P.O. BOX No. 192 3-II, DUNLOP STREET, GLASGOW